THE PARABLE OF THE DOVE:

BEING

A Review of the late Controverſie between the *BLACK-BIRDS*, and the *MAGPIES*; tending to an Amicable Accommodation of all the Differences which at preſent diſturb the Feather'd Nations.

I Won't rail at Parables, becauſe I'm writing one my ſelf; and how ſilly ſoever 'tis like to be, it can't be worſe than other things which have extremely pleas'd ſome ſorts of People. This I'm ſure of, that with Fables, or without 'em, when the World is weary of quarrelling, 'twill be quiet in its own defence. Whether this be the lucky time, or no, I can't tell, but am reſolv'd rather to venture a Broken Head o' both Sides, to make my Country-men Friends, than either bett on either Side for the ſake of a little naſty Profit, or ſtand ſtill, and laugh at both, while they knock out one another's Brains, and ſave their Enemies the labour.

'Tis no News to thoſe who have conſulted the new *Virtuoſo*-Maps, that there lie ſeveral little Worlds, or, if you pleaſe, Airy Iſlands, between this World, and that in the Moon, where the Birds, you muſt know, us'd to call in and bait, when tired with their Flight thither at the end of our Winter.

'Twas in one of theſe little Worlds, fix'd in a very temperate Region, ſome where or other between the two Tropicks, that the *Eagles* kept their Royal Court, in an old white Rock, by the ſide of a curious River, where their Races had been ſetled, and ruled the reſt of the Birds for ſeveral Ages, who never dar'd miſs calling in there, and doing 'em Homage, in their paſſage to or from the Airy Regions.

Once upon a time then (to obſerve the venerable form of our Great Grandmothers) it ſo fell out, that the then regnant *Eagle*, thinking it below him to match with any of his Subjects, ſent

to the *Vulture*'s Court for a Mate; which Opportunity the Family of the *Vultures* moſt readily embrac'd, hoping thereby in time to get a Claw in the *Eagle*'s Do minions, or at leaſt preſerve his own, which he had formerly uſurp'd from the Predeceſſors of the *Eagle*; and accordingly ſent one of the ſubt'leſt of all his Family, who, in time, wrought ſo much on the Affections of her Royal Mate, that nothing was tranſacted in the Council of the Birds, without her Privity and Direction Vaſt Flocks of *Vultures* flew daily over, who, being encourag'd by ſo great a Patroneſs, ſeduced not a few of the Subjects of the *Eagle*; and arriv'd to ſuch Inſolence in a neighbouring World, under his Dominion, which, from the multitude of *Hawks* there, was firſt call'd *Fernia*, and ſince *Hibernia*, that, at a Signal given, they maſſacr'd all the Birds who were loyal to the *Eagle*, making no difference between *Blackbirds* and *Magpyes*, but wrung off their Necks, and tore 'em to pieces, firing their Neſts, and breaking all their Eggs, in the moſt barbarous manner that ever was heard of, pretending the *Eagle*'s Authority for their ſo doing. And this indeed, whatever elſe may be alledg'd, was the main Cauſe of thoſe dreadful Wars, which not long after aroſe in this little World, to the deſtruction of many thouſands of its feather'd Inhabitants; the *Magpyes* and *Blackbirds*, with all the reſt, ſiding with that Party which their Inclinations or Intereſt led 'em moſt to favour, while the Gaulleſs *Dove*, who truly lov'd his Country, and was Friend to all Sides, ſate alone in his Louver, and deplor'd the common Calamity. Nor did the dreadful Confuſion theſe Diſſentions produc'd, end in any thing leſs than the Deſtruction of the *Eagle*, baniſhing all his Progeny, and ſetting up a Commonwealth of the Birds, inſtead of the ancient Monarchy by which they had been ſo long govern'd, and which ſeem'd much more agreeable to the Genius of the Airy Inhabitants, who generally believ'd that *Jupiter* himſelf had ſet the *Eagles* over 'em, tho, at the bottom, they had been only choſen Kings by general Conſent, and for the Good of the Whole. But the Birds had not been long in this Condition, before a cunning old *Stork*, who had been formerly a General of the *Blackbirds*, againſt the *Magpyes* and the *Eagle*, being grown too ſtrong, as well as too cunning for the reſt of the ſilly Birds, and having none to oppoſe him, uſurp'd the Throne of the murther'd *Eagle*, enjoying all the Power which he had before, without the invidious Name; and with his dreadful Bill, and ſharp Claws, frighting the Parliament of the Birds from their moſt ſteady Reſolves, and tearing all their Charters to pieces, huffing all the Worlds about him, as well as his own, and making the very *Vultures* tremble. For, to give the Devil his due, 'twas a Bird both of Policy and Valour; and had the *Eagles* themſelves, after their Reſtoration, in ſome things, follow'd his Steps, their Government had been, in all probability, much more firm and happy. Yet, after all, 'twas diſcover'd by the reſt of the Birds, that the *Stork*'s pretences of Love to his Country were confuted, by his palpable Endeavours to raiſe himſelf, and his Family, upon their Ruins; ſetting up a more abſolute Tyranny than ever was practis'd by the Race of the *Eagles*. On this the Birds began to conſult againſt him; his Government every Day grew weak and tottering, which, together with the ſuddain Death of one of his young ones, ſo ſtruck to his Heart, (for the Stork is a very affectionate Bird,) that, in the highth of all his Glory, he on the ſuddain dropp'd off his Perch, and died; the *Blackbirds* generally affirming he was poiſon'd, and the *Magpyes* telling the World the Devil fetch'd him away in a Whirl-wind; whereas in truth, he e'en fairly dy'd for want of Breath, as well as all other Birds. After his Departure, the Birds ſoon fell into a terrible Confuſion, which oblig'd 'em at laſt to re-call the baniſh'd *Eaglet*, and re-inſtate him in the Throne of his Anceſtors.

But not to meddle with Affairs during his Reign, any more than he himſelf did, who was indeed more earneſtly employed to find out the fineſt Birds in his Territory, *Peacocks*, *Pheaſants*, *Birds of Paradice*, *&c.* than either the *Magpies* or *Blackbirds*, at his ſudden and *expected* Death, the unnatural *Oſtrich*, contrary to the ſenſe of two or three Parliaments of Birds, aſcended the Throne: But long he had not enjoyed the Sovereignty, before he publickly ſided with the *Vultures*, and brought in whole Flights of them, the *Kites*, the *Owls*, and other ravenous Birds, to the utter deſtruction both of *Magpies* and *Blackbirds*, tho to the latter of theſe he pretended the greateſt kindneſs; while the good-natur'd *Dove* was concern'd for the main, and feared the common Ruin.

And here it may be worth the while to enquire into the occaſion of the difference between the *Magpies* and the *Blackbirds*— and 'twas a wiſe one if you knew all— no better nor worſe than on account of their Colours; the *Blackbirds* thought

thought the *Magpies* too fine and gaudy, and would for that reason have pulled out all their white Feathers,as marks of the Beast, rather than the true Livery of the Birds: The *Magpies* on 'tother side urg'd truly enough, that many other of the Feather'd Nation wore the same Colour; that 'twas ancient and innocent; and thus far perhaps they were in the right; but not staying here, they push'd the business further to be even with the *Blackbirds*,chattering most unmercifully against their Black Coats and short Tails, as undecent and unmannerly; whereas the poor Creatures could not change their Colour, nor spread their Tails any further or larger than Nature had made 'em, tho 't had been to save their Necks, while the Doves could hardly keep the Peace between 'em. And this had by the Artifice of the *Vulture*, as well as their own Folly, raised many a Fewd between 'em, tho otherwise in their own Natures both of 'em very peaceable Birds.

We won't relate what either Party did in their Turns to bertay their Liberties to the *Ostrich*,out of Folly, Interest or Revenge; suffie it,that all of 'em soon found out the Cheat; and finding the Design of the *Ostrich* was only to make 'em a Prey to the *Rooks*,*Owls*,*Hawks*,*Vultures*,and the other unlucky Birds which composed his Court, where none besides now appeared; they sent over their unanimous Petition to a Foreign *Eagle* who had long roosted in a neighbouring World, to come and assist 'em in their extremity. This *Eagle* was of the true Royal Cast; and tho his Father dy'd before he was born, and could not himself try his Legitimacy,as the use of that Bird is, by flying up with him against the Sun, yet of his own accord he enured himself to that exercise,and took a strange pleasure in it. Besides,tho he were yet young,and his Pounces hardly grown, he had more than once met the *Vulture*, whose Territories lay in the same Continent with his own,and held him so stiffly to the Combat in defence of the *Sea-Pies*,among whom he lived,that he had very seldom any reason to boast of his Conquests over him. But he was born for other Worlds as well as his own,and after the repeated Addresses of the *Ostrich*'s Subjects,came over to relieve 'em,which he did with such Success,that as you have bin told in the former Parables,away scamper'd all the *Rooks*,*Hawks*,*Owls*and *Vultures*, which made up his Court,and prey'd upon the airy Nations; and being gone without so much as striking a stroke, the Nation of the Birds being in a perfect Anarchy,and all things in Confusion, the Birds being now again reduced to their state Nature, chose the young *Eagle* their Deliverer for their Sovereign, who with his Royal Mate was advanced to the Throne, with the repeated Carols and Acclamations of that and all the Neighbouring Worlds.

Nor had the *Vultures*, to whom the *Ostrich* had fled for Succor, any other way now left to destroy the happy Estate of the Birds, and preserve their own ill gotten Conquests, but by reviving the old Quarrel between the *Blackbirds* and the *Magpies*, to obstruct the Designs of the *Eagle*, and betray 'em all to the common Enemy. To this end he not only employed Emissaries in the *Eagle*'s Country, who conspired to dethrone him,and bring in the *Vultures*,on pretence of the *Ostrich*'s Title; but by all means possible endeavoured the exasperating the two powerful Parties of the *Magpies* and *Blackbirds* one against another, in which he made a greater Progress than could have been imagined. The *Blackbirds* complained of the sharpness of the *Magpies* Claws, and that they kept the Steeples to themselves, refusing to admit them thither for shelter. The *Magpies* answered, that 'twas their own Fault, and that they rather chose Hedges and Field Conventicles, having a mortal Enmity to all the Steeple-Houses in the World, adding besides, and never ceasing to whisper it in the *Eagle*'s Ear, that the *Blackbirds* were with all their Hearts for a Commonwealth of Birds, and would never be at rest till Monarchy was agen turned out of Doors, or at least reduced to what they please.

Things being in this miserable condition, and all the Birds more ready to engage their Friends, than oppose the common Enemy: The *Dove* who was all along for Unity and Moderation, fain would have salv'd all the Accusations writ by the different Parties, one against another; as a great Emperor once did in the other World, burnt 'em all before their faces. But since that was impracticable, he petition'd the *Eagle* for a general Meeting or Convocation of the *Magpies*, in order to accommodate Differences between them and the *Blackbirds* their old Enemies. This he obtain'd, but to little or no purpose; for tho the *Magpies* had formerly promised, when in the Clutches of the *Ostrich* and panting for Life, if the *Blackbirds* wou'd stand by 'em, to come to any Terms with 'em, they could reasonably desire, when once delivered from the common Calamity, they now forgot they had said one word of the Matter; and o'tother side, tho' the *Blackbird* then seem'd very

very well disposed to Peace and Unity (as all sorts of Creatures are Friends, when united by mutual Danger) 'twas now absolutely gon out of their minds, that they ever desired any such thing. And both sides, instead of agreeing in Charity and common Offices of Love, fell a-new on each other with Beaks and Claws as furiously as ever; Scandals and Lies flying about of all sides; the *Blackbirds* accused all the *Magpies*, for being Friends to the *Ostrich*'s Government(because some of them were really so) and the *Magpies* accusing them, for being for no Government at all, because, perhaps some of them were of that Humor. In the mean time, none can express, what Ravage is daily made between the different Factions; how many Eyes struck out, and Feathers pull'd, and Down flying all round the Airy Regions. The *Dove* still persists in his fruitless Endeavours to reconcile 'em, tells 'em in vain the danger of an approaching Enemy, who would take 'em at a great disadvantage thus unprepared; assures 'em, they are on both sides extreamly mistaken, and that many are true Friends to the State of the Birds and the Interest of the Eagle, whom either Party abused as inclined to the *Storks* or *Ostrich*; and tells 'em the truth of the Business is, That Profit is at the Root of all, and that the feathered People will never be at quiet, till little particular narrow Interests submit to the common good; while all the Requital she meets wth, is never to expect Preferment; whoever is uppermost, to be jostled about between the two contending Parties, to whom she may coo her Heart out, before she bring 'em an Inch nearer one another, than they were almost an hundred years ago, and to be called a Trimmer or Bat for all her Labour. In the mean time while she bears her Misfortunes as equally as she can, and impatiently expects the return of the Ryoal Eagle, whose Affairs have lately call'd him into the World of the *Scapies*, and who, if Heaven prosper his just Cause against the *Valture*, will, she doubts not, when he has more Time and Leasure, teach both Parties better Manners.

Cælestial Peace! *Where shall we meet with thee?*
Thou art all Smiles, all Heav'n, all Harmony.
Descend, bright Goddess *from thy radiant Shrine*
All beauteous like thy self, and all Divine!
One hand an Olive-Branch, *the Mark of Love,*
And in the other bear thy Darling-Dove. (live;
Charm down each Feud, and teach the World to
First, teach it to forget, *and then* forgive.
Till the last Golden Age *receive new Birth,*
And Men at last enjoy an Heav'n on Earth.

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